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20 July 1982

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa - 20 July 1982

1. On 20 July 1982 [ ] Office of African and Latin American Analysis/DDI, were back-up witnesses at a closed briefing of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa by the State Department. The subject covered was the Ethiopia-Somalia border fighting. Officials of DIA, Defense Security Assistance Agency, and AID were also present. A transcript was taken by the Official House Reporters. Material presented was at the Secret level. [ ]

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2. After nearly an hour's delay due to lack of a quorum and floor votes, Chairman Howard Wolpe (D., MI) began the briefing. Also present for all or part of the briefing were: [ ]

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George W. Crockett (D., MI)  
Stephen J. Solarz (D., NY)  
Dennis E. Eckart (D., OH)

William F. Goodling (R., PA)  
Arlen Erdahl (R., MN)

3. Present from the full Committee and Subcommittee staffs were: [ ]

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Steve Weissman  
Priscilla Newman  
Jerry Pitchford

Gardner Peckham  
Mickey Harmon  
Arch Roberts

Steven Lindroth, of Representative Erdahl's staff, and Stanley Roth, of Representative Solarz' staff, also attended.

4. Princeton Lyman, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, was the State Department spokesman. He began by reviewing the recent border activity in which Ethiopian and Ethiopian-supported forces have seized two towns inside Somalia. He said that the intent of the Ethiopian effort was to destabilize the Somalia regime. He described the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two opposing forces. He added that the U.S. has not delivered a single military item to Somalia yet. The first shipment of military aid will arrive there this week. On the political side, he mentioned the importance to us of our access agreement with the Somali Government. The Department, he said, was planning to move ahead at a limited and measured pace with assistance. He gave a rundown of the types of military items requested by the Somalis. He added that there have been changes in their requirements. He said that the Somalis have sought assistance from other countries such as Egypt and Italy. [ ]

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5. The Members asked a number of questions. They had to do with the limits of U.S. aid to Somalia, the strength of the Siad regime and the prevailing political climate there. They were also interested in whether the Somalis provoked the Ethiopian attacks. [ ]

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Chairman Wolpe then asked the State Department witness a series of questions based on

State Dept. review completed [ ]

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his belief that the Somalis may have violated the agreements under which our arms assistance had been extended. Representative Crockett commented that Somalia is one of the poorest countries in the world and that they do not need military aid from the U.S. Representative Solarz was interested in the strength and composition of the opposing forces. After a break for a vote, [ ] in response to a question, outlined the intelligence regarding the decision made by Mengistu to launch the attacks. Chairman Wolpe returned to his earlier line of questions and asked whether the Department planned to abide by the Congressional restraint with regard to the arms shipments to Somalia. Mr. Lyman assured him that it did and had repeatedly reminded the Somalis of the conditions of the arms agreement. The Chairman claimed that he was hearing a difference of fact between the Department and the Agency on the question of the Somali forays into Ethiopia. The witnesses, however, restated their position and asserted that there was no fundamental difference between our views of the forays. [ ] indicated at this point that Somalia has no way of knowing where the Ethiopian troops are other than by the reconnaissance mission. He said they use them to inform themselves and they do not have a mission other than reconnaissance in mind. The State Department witness concluded by repeating what he had said earlier—the threat is not Somalia against Ethiopia but Ethiopia against Somalia. [ ]

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Legislative Liaison

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